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A

# LETTER

To the Right Honourable

## The Lord B----y.

BEING

An INQUIRY into the MERIT of his DEFENCE of *Minorca*.

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# A LETTER

TO THE

## Right Honourable the Lord Bl—y.

My Lord,

AFTER that very great ſhare of popular applauſe which you have received for your defence of *Minorca*; and the honour you have been raiſed to ſince your return from thence; it may be wondered, perhaps, that any one ſhould doubt of your merit, or addreſs a letter to you, which is intended to bring

under examination the ground of those praises which have been given you. But, as the author is not led to this inquiry by any private disgusts, you will find here no personal reflection, nor any thing to alarm you, more than what may naturally be expected from a free and candid inquiry into your behaviour. If your conduct has been unblameable, the merit of it will hereby appear so much the brighter: if on the contrary, it should be found that you have been deficient in the duties of a good officer and governor, it is very fit that the public should be undeceived. The making this known is not merely a debt due to truth and justice, but a very necessary precaution for the public security, and the future honor of the service.

I do not now, my Lord, condemn, or even accuse you: all that I suppose at present, is, that it is possible at least, that your conduct may have been blamable. If that should have been the case, what must be the sentiments of those younger officers, who served under you; when after having seen you neglect those attentions

which

which a good governor ought to have, they come home and find you applauded by the whole nation for your defence?

Should they think these applauses just, they must be confirmed in the most dangerous mistakes; which in some future siege may have a very fatal influence on their own behaviour; and they may afterwards plead your bad conduct as a precedent, by which to justify their own neglect of their duty. If on the other hand they should be sensible of your defects, and inwardly laugh at those public honors which they know you never merited; yet what a discouragement is this to every noble arm to deserve well of the public by true bravery and right conduct; to see those who have behaved ill, meet with a more general applause, and rewarded with greater honor, than those who have behaved well.

In the inquiry which I propose, every one will easily see the difficulty which there is in getting at the truth of facts. A garrison in an island, like a single ship at sea, is the perfect master of its own history. This

little community has an interest and an honor of its own, distinct from that of the public; and it is not easy to draw out any thing from the individuals, which they apprehend may reflect dishonor on the society they belong to. Some few particulars however have come to light, which the public ought to know, and are the foundation of these remarks: and which, now when the torrent of praise is abated, may be thought worth their calmer consideration.

The first thing I have to mention is a fact, which we cannot be mistaken in, because we have it from your own mouth. Your Lordship at Mr. *Byng*'s trial, was pleased voluntarily to declare: "That it is the duty of a governor "to remain in one fixt place, to receive "his intelligence: he has his people to "send out for intelligence, and is to re-"main there to give his orders. And, if "from curiosity he goes out to the out-"works, it is impossible to say what length "of time it may be before he may be "wanted. As he remains there, he can "know nothing but what he receives from "others; and I took no minutes to have re-

" recourſe to: therefore what I have de-
" clared is to be underſtood only as matter
" of hearſay."

They, my Lord, who were preſent at the ſiege, and know, that during the whole of it you kept yourſelf ſhut up in your own houſe, without ſhewing yourſelf in time of action, at the batteries or ramparts, will eaſily underſtand the reaſon of your lordſhip's turning back again to the court, after you had given your evidence touching the matters then in queſtion, to make this voluntary declaration: and I am ſorry that any tenderneſs there, ſtopp'd you from going on, and producing, probably, many other curious particulars in the hiſtory of your own conduct. Not from any malevolent pleaſure I ſhould take in hearing men expoſe their own errors; but becauſe I think, that any farther lights thrown on this ſubject muſt have had a very good effect to open mens eyes, and rouſe the public attention to the preſent very low ſtate of our military genius.

I would

I would not herein be underſtood to ſpeak of our army : I hope there are many officers in our ſervice equal to thoſe of any other nation. But with regard to the people in general, one of the greateſt misfortunes of the preſent time, ſeems to be the general ignorance of the age in affairs of war, and the total inattention of the public to all the duties of a military character ; which expoſes us to the groſſeſt impoſitions, and betrays us into the abſurdeſt judgments on affairs of this kind.

When the public, ſir, had ſo well told your ſtory for you, how low have you ſet our judgment, by this ſhort beginning only, to tell it yourſelf? after all the fine things we had been inventing to your advantage, the only two particulars you have mentioned of your conduct, happen to be ſuch, as demonſtrate, either that you had never thought of the duties of a governor, or elſe that you thought of them in a different manner from all the reſt of the world. This may ſeem a pretty hardy aſſertion, but we

" ſhall

ſhall find it warranted by the greateſt authorities.

There cannot be a more known rule in war than this; that if a commander in chief does not attend to ſee things done himſelf, the example of his negligence will ſoon diffuſe itſelf among the officers under him: who will in like manner leave their duty to be perform'd by ſubalterns. " King " *William*, ſays Mr. *Bland*, whoſe mili- " tary capacity was ſecond to none, was per- " fectly knowing in the ſmall, as well as the " grand detail of an army. In viſiting the " out-poſts, he would frequently conde- " ſcend to place the centinels himſelf, and " inſtruct the officers how to do it."

" Nothing but the general's neglect of " his duty, ſays Mr. *Kane*, at the ſiege of " *Athlone*, could have enabled us to take " the place in the manner we did." If the commanding officer neglects his poſt (as it was here) all under him will do the ſame.

To

To how little purpose have all the writers on military discipline entered into the detail of a governor's duty, if he is never to act himself, or stir out of his own house? Mr. *Bland*, for instance, in his chapter of sieges, lays down rules about the time and manner of a governor's going the rounds; and states the different ceremonial, with which his guard is to be received at the several posts, from that of the captain of the guards, and that of the town-major.

Every thing which Mr. *Feuquiere* has written on this subject is unintelligible jargon and absurdity; and at least one quarter of his book is useless, if this new doctrine of yours should be admitted.

Had your Lordship ascribed this state of inactivity to your great age and the infirmities you laboured under, every man would have made the reasonable allowances on that account. We could have been sorry, for our country's sake, that the defence of so important a fortress should have been committed to an old officer in the decline of

his powers; and transferred our indignation from you to that other general, who, tho' appointed to go to *Minorca* so long before as *November* last, could not find his way thither in six months after *; and to those other colonels, who old and infirm as they knew you to be, determined to leave you to yourself; and from the first hour, in which they heard at *Gibraltar*, that there was an enemy in the island, appear plainly by the minutes of their council, to have resolved never to be landed there.

But, my Lord, when an officer of your age and rank in the army, whose general fame may possibly give authority to his opinion, lays it down as a rule of duty, that the governor of a place besieged, ought himself to remain stationary and unactive, leaving it to other people to bring him intelligence; and when it is known, that in conformity to this rule, you kept yourself shut up in your own house, directing about things, which you never went to see; it is

* Why could not general *S——t* have gone by land to *Turin*, from whence there is a ready passage to *Minorca*, as easily as lord *B——l* did?

very fit that ſome notice ſhould be taken of this, in order that the public may know to whom they are indebted for that defence which was made, and to what cauſe it was owing, that there was no better.

I have taken your words from Mr. *Cook*'s copy of the trial; they are left out in the judge advocate's; but there are witneſſes enough of your having ſaid them.

" It is the duty of a governor to remain in " one fixed place; and if from curioſity, he " goes out to the outworks, it is impoſſible " to ſay what length of time it may be before " he may be wanted." A very proper rule of prudence to be laid down by a man-midwife, but never before thought of in any military command; and you are the firſt governor, that ever avowed it.

Had the place of your government been as large as *Namur* or *Liſle*, there might have been ſome appearance of reaſon for this practice; and yet marſhal *de Boufflers* was very far from ſhutting himſelf up during theſe ſieges. But in ſo ſmall a fort as *St. Philip*'s

*Philip's*, there was no danger of being loſt: and, let a governor have been any where about the works, he might very eaſily have been found.

Were it a governor's whole concern to get quick intelligence of what is doing all around him; he would then certainly be in the right to conceal himſelf, like a ſpider in the center of his own works: where by each concentrating ſtring, he feels whatever paſſes in his outworks; but there is this material difference in the two caſes: that the ſpider's buſineſs is to tempt aſſailants into his works, and a governor's to keep them out.

It may be ſaid, perhaps, that your life was of ſo much more importance, as there were ſo few other officers in the fort to ſucceed to your command. If G—l *St—t* and L—d *R—t B—e*, and the two other colonels, who were ſent to aſſiſt you, reſolved never to enter the harbour; out of reſpect to great batteries at the mouth of it*, erected in their imaginations, and

 fired

* *Vide* the Minutes of their council of war held at *Gibraltar*, with the admiral's letter of the ſame date.

fired only only in the ears of the engineer they consulted with, for a plea to excuse themselves; if these mens refusal to bring you the succours ordered, rendered the preservation of your single life of so much more importance; yet as they kept back with them not less than thirty commission-officers belonging to the garrison, and thereby made the duty lie so much the harder upon those that were there; this made it so much the more necessary for the few officers present, to exert themselves, and for you to be so much the more active in encouraging them.

My Lord, the only public consideration, which makes the life of a soldier of importance, is his being ready to risque it upon important occasions: and, if a superior officer is in no degree to hazard it in the defence of a place intrusted to him, it then becomes the most worthless of any in his garrison.

All this does not imply any obligation on a governor to expose himself unnecessarily, by prying into the extremities of the attacks, and

and minutely obſerving the effects of each of the enemies batteries. But the moderate ſharing of leſſer dangers, in order to incourage other officers to preſent themſelves to greater; and, the being ſo far preſent at the ſeveral attacks as to inform himſelf of the general ſtate of them; the frequent going the rounds to ſee that every one is alert and doing his duty at the ſeveral poſts; theſe things have always been underſtood to be the duties of a governor, and have been invariably practiſed by every good one in all ſieges down to this of *St. Philip's*.

The hiſtory of every ſiege of importance would ſerve me to prove this. But I am not going to lead your Lordſhip 200 years back in hiſtory: or to refer you to thoſe ages of heroiſm, when it was cuſtomary for governors to hold out to the laſt aſſault, and die fighting in the breach. Theſe, I know, are not times to expect the ſpirit of a Duke of *Guiſe* in the defence of *Metz*, or of his ſon at *Poictiers*, or greater than either, of a *Villars* at *Rouen*.

I ſhall therefore confine myſelf to the ſieges of your own days, and to thoſe only that occur in your own neighbourhood: I mean the places bordering upon the *Mediterranean* juſt round about you.

Surely, my Lord, the life of a ſoldier of fortune, even in his own eſtimation of its importance, cannot be ſuppoſed more valuable than that of a crown'd head, a duke of *Savoy*, or a king of *Spain*, and yet how different from yours was their behaviour in the memorable ſieges of *Turin* and *Barcelona*?

*Charles* III. heir of the empire, expoſed a much greater perſonage than yours, at this latter place, in the beginning of the year 1706, "The king," ſays the Journal of the ſiege, (for in thoſe days *Engliſhmen* could write journals) "has been every day "on horſeback, ſometimes at *Montjuiſch*, "and ſometimes round the city ramparts; "and is, indeed, the life and ſoul of the "people." And again, "His majeſty by "his preſence and example, gives life and "vigor

" vigor to the whole city, often ſhewing " himſelf in thoſe places where moſt dan- " ger is." *Annals* p. 106. " My lord " *Donnegal*, who commands in *Mont-* " *juiſch*, is highly approved at court for " his behaviour; having upon all occaſions " ſhewn a true *Engliſh* valour; and the " preſervation of the place is chiefly owing " to his Example." I need not tell your Lordſhip, I ſuppoſe, the fate of this your countryman: who, far from ſhutting himſelf up in his own houſe, died fighting upon the rampart, in defence of the fort, that was intruſted to him.

" By this active courage of its gover- " nor (ſays king *Charles*, in his letter to " the States General) was *Montjuiſch* de- " fended for 23 days open trenches, which " your troops took in three hours," and *Barcelona* preſerved, till the arrival of the *Engliſh* fleet and ſuccours obliged the *French* to raiſe the ſiege, and leave 150 braſs cannon and mortars behind them in their trenches.

The

The ſame good conduct was rewarded with a like ſucceſs preſently after this at *Turin*. The duke of *Savoy* knew nothing of this new rule of duty, that a governor ſhould ſit ſtill, and ſend out other people for intelligence.

See the account of the ſiege, in the annals of the times.

*May* the 13th, 1706. The enemy came within ſight of *Turin*. Hereupon his royal highneſs got on horſeback, viſited the ſeveral poſts about the place; ordered all the houſes within cannon-ſhot of the citadel to be pulled down: gave directions for poſting the guards, for placing the cannon upon the ramparts; in ſhort, forgot nothing which might contribute to the defence of the place. (I ſhall hereafter, have occaſion to remark the difference in your conduct, who left a number of houſes ſtanding within a 150 yards of your principal outworks.)

The

"The 14th, his royal highness was on "horseback by 5 o'clock in the morning to "view the enemies camp, and observe their "situation, and the works which they were "making.

"The 16th, his royal highness was on "horseback;" and though he could not but have as many emissaries as the governor of *Minorca*, to send out for intelligence; yet "he went himself to see if it were possible "to hinder the enemy from passing the "*Doria*.

"*June* the 3d, at night the trenches were "opened both against the town and citadel; "and his royal highness having the next "day view'd the enemies works, ordered the "guards in the citadel and at the gate of "*Suza* to be doubled; and gave other ne-"cessary directions for the defence of the "place. The first of which was this; That "the Marquis *de Lusinge*, the governor of "*Turin*, being old and infirm, and not in "a condition to do service, his royal "highness intrusted Count *Daun*, the

 "im-

" imperial general, with the care of the " place." Who had never made ſo vigorous a defence, for four months; and, by the advantage of mines in a ſoft rock, like yours, five times, ſucceſſively, blown up the enemies batteries erected on the glacis, throwing over their cannon into the ditch of the place, if he had ſhut himſelf up in the center of the city, and been content to get his knowledge of the enemies works from the intelligence of other men.

The reader might think it unneceſſary to dwell ſo long on the proof of ſo plain a point as this, That the governor of a place beſieged, ought himſelf to look after the defence of it. But when an officer, in a public court of judicature ſpeaks of 63 years ſervice; and then lays down general rules of duty, unworthy even of an Enſign of ſix months ſtanding; the proof of the plaineſt truths, when contradicted by ſo great an authority, becomes a ſerious concern; and the very extraordinary honours done to a man, who performed ſo little of his duty, are not only a national diſgrace, but they create a danger too, leſt

he ſhould give authority to his opinions, which might produce the moſt fatal conſequences on ſome future occaſion.

I muſt beg leave, therefore, to remind your Lordſhip of the ſiege of one other place, which you are ſtill more cloſely connected with. How very different was the prince of *Heſſe*'s behaviour, which ſaved us *Gibraltar*, from your cautious method of conduct at *Minorca*? It was not by ſitting at home, and ſending out others for intelligence, that he defended this important conqueſt for ſix months together; but by conſtantly going the rounds, ſeeing that every one did his duty, and by being himſelf preſent in every danger, and leading on his men at every attack. See the *Journal of the Siege.*

" The beſiegers continued furiouſly to " batter the place; and, upon the 11th at " night, 5 or 600 of them climbed up the " rock, and got upon the mountain, thro " a way that was thought impracticable, " they were to be ſupported by 3000 men: " but the former being diſcovered in time,

" the prince of *Heſſe* marched himſelf
" againſt them with 500 men, and charged
" them with ſo much vigor, that above
" 200 were killed on the ſpot, and 200
" more with a colonel and 30 officers
" were taken priſoners."

Activity and vigilance were then thought duties of a governor. " Mean
" time the prince of *Heſſe* redoubled
" his diligence for preventing the de-
" ſigns of the enemy, and ſpent all the days
" in the works, and moſt part of the night
" in the covert way; and this example had
" ſo good an effect, that the garriſon
" did more than could be humanly ex-
" pected.

" The prince of *Heſſe* is the ſoul of the
" garriſon; he ſcarce ever allows himſelf
" above two hours continued reſt, either
" by day or night, diſcharging at once the
" different parts of a general, ſoldier, en-
" gineer, gunner, and pioneer, which is a
" mighty encouragement to the officers
" and ſoldiers to do their duty."

By

By theſe means he ſuſtain'd a ſiege almoſt triple the length of yours; and, though he had forty cannon diſmounted, and a great part of his works deſtroyed, and more men kill'd about his own perſon, than the number of ſlain of your whole garriſon amounted to during the ſiege, yet he ſtill held out, deſtroying 10,000 men of the beſiegers: an army almoſt equal to that which you was attack'd by. And all this he did with an *Engliſh* garriſon, which, for a long time was inferior to yours, and in want of officers like yours:——With this melancholy difference indeed, that when the earl of *Galway*, having advice that the garriſon wanted able officers, (the *Spaniſh* lieutenant-governor, and ſeveral others having been killed during the ſiege,) ſent before colonel *Lundy*, lieutenant colonel *Rieutore*, and lieutenant colonel *Darcourt* to ſerve in the ſiege. Theſe three brave officers (tho' they had not kiſs'd the queen's hand as a pledge of their fidelity) were content in a ſingle veſſel, to venture, in the night, thro' all the enemies ſhips lying in the bay, and got into the place beſieged; whereas your

four

four generous ſuccourers adviſed and voted, that their own fleet ſhould run away, and thereby kept themſelves out *.

There

* Surely theſe gentlemen do not think their conduct in the leaſt juſtified by the defence, which they have publiſhed; in which they very largly exculpate themſelves from faults which they could not be accountable for, to divert the public attention from their real ones, which they have been charged with, and which they have never anſwered.

Why they were not ſent earlier? Why the admiral did not land them the firſt night after he arrived? Theſe are queſtions in which they are leſs concerned. No one of the four, except g—l *S——t*, receiv'd an order early enough to get to *Minorca* ſooner; and no one but lord *R——t B——e* could declare to the admiral his willingneſs to be landed the firſt night, as he was the only one of them, that was on board the *Ramillies* and had acceſs to him.

Why theſe land-officers went to a ſea council of war, is not the queſtion which the public is the moſt concerned in; but what they did when they came there. What they voted and ſigned in theſe two councils of war, by which the expedition was effectually ruin'd; that was a matter in their own power; that the public has a right to aſk their reaſons for; and to that their defence does not ſay a ſingle word.

When the nation had been at an infinite expence to fit out a fleet, which was primarily intended

There is one other particular discovered in your evidence, which ought not to be pass'd over, tho' not of equal importance with the foregoing.

" I tended for this single purpose of convoying two regiments to *Minorca*; if the officers, instead of going to the expedition they are sent on, are allowed the liberty to call a council of war, and there suppose every possible advantage in favour of the enemy, and every possible disadvantage against themselves, there will never be wanting a reason for relinquishing every future service."

" I believe there was a small battery (says Mr. " *Boyd* in Mr. *Byng*'s trial) in a direction to have " annoyed: I can't say annoyed: for the annoy- " ance, I found from it, was so very insignificant, " that I can't call it by that name. Only a strag- " ling fire from small arms, and three or four " cannon-shot, not one of which hit, tho' all " three directed, in open day, at one single boat." How much less had been the danger to the individuals, if the same fire had been divided between a great number of boats, and in the night too. Yet these are the formidable batteries, on account of which, these gentlemen at *Gibraltar* determined: *That it would be difficult if not impossible to throw in succours.* And, despairing of the place, or fearing to lose this pretence to keep out of it, upon Better intelligence, when the fleet should come thither; resolved to leave the regiment behind them.

" I would advise every governor, says " Mr. *Feuquiere*, to keep a journal of a " siege, who is desirous to make a good " defence, and prefers the service of his " prince, and his own personal glory, to " any sordid considerations. A governor " by this means will render his conduct ir- " reproachable; and his sovereign will then " have an opportunity of dispensing just re- " wards to those, whose services have me- " rited them. When governors have ne- " glected this, I am apprehensive, that " their neglect has proceeded from a con- " viction that their conduct was not alto- " gether excuseable, either with reference " to the regular defence of the place, or " the application of the king's money dur- " ing the siege."

How little must your Lordship have thought of this part of a governor's duty, who, without being asked, could publicly declare in court: that, far from designing any such thing as a journal, you did not so much as take a single minute of the siege.

Cer-

Certainly, my lord, the defence of a town beſieged, is a ſubject of an extent large enough to take in the whole compaſs of any man's thought and contrivance. A thouſand circumſtances, as well previous to, as during the ſiege, muſt occur to an officer's mind, who is intruſted with ſo important a charge, and would properly acquit himſelf of his duty. 'Tis the paying a due regard to theſe objects, that conſtitutes the goodneſs of a defence: and it is the relation of theſe deſigns, the manner of their execution, and the good or bad effects which attended them, which ought to furniſh the materials of a journal. Where men act with reaſon and deſign, they can relate their reaſons: a battle therefore well fought, or a defence well diſpoſed, can be well told. But when a commander in chief has neglected all the previous diſpoſitions to an action, and does not know what he is about while it is depending, it is impoſſible he ſhould make an orderly narration of it, when it is over.

To proceed: there is no one rule of war more univerſally received, than that of deſtroying the ſuburbs of a place, upon the apprehenſion of a ſiege; and laying the country all round open to the cannon of the ramparts. It would be offering an affront to the reader to bring inſtances of this practice, becauſe it never is omitted. The Duke of *Savoy*, we have already ſeen, ordered all the houſes within cannon-ſhot of his capital to be pull'd down; and the ſame thing was done at *Toulon* upon the approach of prince *Eugene* in the year 1707: " The ſuburbs, and all the country " houſes, amongſt others the fine ſeat of " the Marquis *de Souliers*, were demo- " liſhed."

If a government finds it neceſſary to deſtroy the houſes of their own ſubjects in this caſe; how much more would you, my Lord, have been juſtified in doing this in an iſland, the poſſeſſion of which was now growing precarious, and depending only on the right meaſures you ſhould take in the de-

defence of the caſtle, which was endangered by theſe houſes.

The event of the ſiege ought to have had no weight in your deliberation on this head. If the enemy ſucceeded, and diſpoſſeſs'd us of the iſland, we ſhould then have no concern about theſe houſes. If the firſt ſuccours ſent had choſen to relieve you, or your own juſt meaſures had enabled you to hold out till the arrival of the ſecond, you would then too have had good reaſon to be pleaſed at having taken that beſt opportunity to get rid of theſe houſes, which had been built againſt all rules of prudence, and ought never to have been ſuffered to ſtand.

Nor could the *Minorquins* have been juſtly diſobliged by your deſtroying them; becauſe, if you did not take them down before, they would all be deſerted at the ſiege; and the erecting the enemies batteries among them, and the firing of yours, muſt neceſſarily ruin them.

If this precaution be neceſſary in other ſieges, it was doubly ſo here; becauſe the enemy had no other means of making a lodgment near the place. In other caſes the beſiegers can ſhelter themſelves in trenches, but the ſoil about St. *Philip's* being an almoſt bare rock, would not admit of ſinking trenches; and the enemy could have no other cover than what was left them by your courteſy.

This, ſir, was ſo glaring a neglect, that even the enemy, after the capitulation, could not help asking, how came your governor to leave theſe houſes ſtanding for us?

" I lay down this obſervation, ſays Mr. " *Feuquier*, in his chapter of attacks, as a " certain maxim, that an attack ſhould ne- " ver be formed againſt a work unleſs the " aſſailants are very near it. And again, a " place ſhould always be attacked in that " part, where it is moſt eaſy to be forced, " with relation to the facility of ſupporting " the attack; which may be ſo conſidera- " ble as to induce a general to open the

" trenches

" trenches on a quarter of greater ſtrength
" than any other."

Marſhal *Boufflers* ventured to ſtand an aſſault in the caſtle of *Namure*, after a breach had been made, upon the preſumption of this ſingle ſecurity. The body of infantry advanced, ſays Mr. *Feuquier*, from too remote a quarter to entertain any reaſonable expectation of ſucceſs, and they accordingly miſcarried. Mr. *Kane*, who was himſelf in this attack, gives the ſame account of it; and ſays, that they had three times the number of men killed in his ſingle regiment, that fell in your whole garriſon during the ſiege.

This conſideration made you perfectly ſafe during the firſt weeks of the ſiege; ſo long as the *French* attacks were at Cape *Mola* at 1500 paces diſtance; and with the harbour too between you and their batteries. We here in *England* aſcribed the length of the ſiege to the judicious diſpoſitions, which we imagined you had made for your defence, and the extraordinary vigour of your fire, to keep the enemy off; where-

as it now appears to have been chiefly owing to their own ſlowneſs, and fear to come near you; ſince you had left a ſhelter for them to lie very ſafe cloſe under your out-works.

For this reaſon poſſibly it was too, that when the general aſſault was made quite round the place, all the other attacks failed, becauſe they were made from a greater diſtance. But that on the Queen's Redoubt, and the *Argyle*, having been made from a quarter almoſt cloſe to the works, ſucceeded; becauſe this circumſtance gave the enemy an opportunity to begin their attack, and get over the palliſadoes, before they were well perceived.

The loſs of this out-work was, in your apprehenſion at leaſt, the loſs of the place: for you the next day beat a parly and ſurrendered. Why then was it left expoſed to this manifeſt inſult, when the miſchief might have been prevented by pulling down the houſes that ſtood near?

Had

Had you resolved to defend the out-lines, which in the plan include the town of *St. Philip's*, these houses might then have been of some use to your garrison; but certainly the same councils, which made you prudently give them up, should have led you to take down the houses.

The removing of them, it must be acknowledged, would have been a work of labour; but in an island, which had 30,000 inhabitants, you could not have wanted hands to effect this, if you had made a proper use of the command which you had over them. The warning of your danger was early enough to give you time for it, and the infinite importance of the thing itself made you less excusable in the neglect of it.

The reader need only cast his eye on the plan to be convinced of their importance. All the batteries of cannon which did the real hurt, were planted amongst these houses; and all the mortar batteries (which killed the most of those that were killed) were raised just behind them.

In

In ſhort, theſe ſtreets of St. *Philip*'s ſerv'd the enemy at one and the ſame time, for trenches, which they could not have had without them; for a lodgment within the works; for barracks and quarters of refreſhment more convenient than thoſe of the beſieged; for masks to their batteries of cannon while they were building; and a perfect cover to their mortars and their bombardiers from all the fire of the fort.

Since the writing of the remarks on this head, I have the ſatisfaction of finding them ſupported by the beſt authority. Mr. *Armſtrong* in his 4th letter of the hiſtory of *Minorca* informs us, that, " Since the " outworks of the caſtle have been run out " to ſuch an extent; the glacis in ſome " places almoſt reaches the buildings of the " Araval or ſuburb of *St. Philip*'s. So " that, as things at preſent ſtand, an enemy " would find theſe houſes a convenient " ſhelter, to favour his approaches, and " cover his workmen in the conſtruction " of his batteries. Wherefore the houſes " ought certainly to be forthwith cleared " away."

" away." A note ſays, " This has been " done, ſo as to leave a ſufficient eſpla- " nade between the village and the fortifi- " cations." Yet the *French* made this very uſe of the houſes, which was here predicted.

Another thing, which might have engaged your Lordſhip's attention, was the ſmallneſs of your garriſon, and the means of obviating thoſe inconveniencies, which you would ſuffer during the ſiege from the want of men.

You could not but be aware that the duty would lie hard enough upon the four Regiments you had with you; and ought to have foreſeen, that a great number of workmen and labourers would be wanted, in providing the neceſſaries for the garriſon, and the defence of the fort. Were there not ſeveral hundred of your ſoldiers imploy'd every night in carrying of earth, in making of blinds, repairing of damages, *&c.* beſides the cleaning their pieces, filling cartridges, and a hundred other neceſſary ſervices? Could not four or five

hundred *Minorquins* have done all theſe duties of labour juſt as well, while the ſoldiers might have been allowed to take their reſt, and riſe ſo much the more in heart to go through the duties of honour?

There was a drum beat for volunteers, and a number of the *Minorquins* inliſted: if you had taken theſe men immediately into your garriſon, inſtead of contenting yourſelf with their names, they could not have all diſperſed as ſoon as the enemy landed. So far as the aſſiſtance of the few *Greeks*, which were in the fort, could contribute to the defence of it, the garriſon and the public were obliged to you. But ſurely, my Lord, a little good management might have ſecured to you out of near thirty thouſand inhabitants as many labourers as you wanted; who would have voluntarily engaged, if they had been immediately entered into pay. Or, even though they had not been willing, they were all ſubjects of the crown of *England*, and you had a right to command their ſervice. And a moderate number of theſe might have been well employed, without at all truſting

to them, or running any risk from their diſſaffection.

The ports being walled up, they could not deſert to the enemy; and a very few guards might have kept them to their labour, without any danger of their mutinying.

My Lord, I ſhould be very ſorry to injure the fame of an old officer; but were there not ſome other neceſſary precautions, which deſerved a governor's attention. We here in *England* gave you the credit of having deſtroyed the roads; and made it impoſſible for the *French* to draw their cannon. We doubted it the leſs, becauſe colonel *Armſtrong* had before told us, " That the garriſon of *Ciudadella*, upon an " alarm, is to make the beſt of their way " to *St. Philip's* caſtle, driving before them " all the cattle, that are eaſily to be found, " and ſpoiling the roads, the better to ob- " ſtruct an enemy on his march." The ſame reaſon holds much ſtronger for deſtroying the road from *Fornelles*; and ſtrongeſt of all, where they both join in one. I do

not ask, my Lord, whether either of these directions were followed, because you chose to stay at home: but had you gone, as the duke of *Savoy* did, to see things done yourself, this latter had not been neglected in many places, and in two or three, where the road was undermined, the powder had not been left unfired, for the *Minorquins* to steal it away, as soon as the soldiers were gone.

And for the cattle; almost the whole stock of the island, which Mr. *Armstrong* computes at six thousand great cattle and sixty thousand less, was left to accommodate the enemy with food and draft: While your soldiers complain that they had no fresh provisions, nor broth for the sick and wounded. It would be easy to shew that there were places enough in the Fort to keep a live stock of sheep sufficient for this purpose.

But want of wine seems to have been still more inexcuseable. The houses of *St. Philips* were all deserted upon the first news of the enemy's landing, and the cellars of them

them left full of wine: yet your men were presently reduced to the scanty allowance of half a pint a day, in an island where the annual growth amounts to 12 or 14000 hogsheads. The reader will be astonished to hear that all this want arose from the most thoughtless improvidence; the soldiers having been ordered to knock off the heads of these hogsheads, and throw away the wine; merely for the sake of taking the empty casks with them into the castle, to fill with earth for blinds and traverses, and other purposes of defence.

The leaving the corn mills of the island standing and intire, is another thing not usually practised: and, considering that the enemy was to bring an additional number of mouths equal to two thirds of the usual inhabitants, it might have distress'd them to have found all the mills destroyed or rendered unserviceable. Something however may be said in excuse for this omission; and it is acknowledged that one of them was taken down, which stood in the town of *St. Philips*, and overlook'd the works of the fort. But when the castle appears to have

have been abundantly provided with all other kinds of ſtores, which could be ſent from *England*, that the only articles, in which you was deficient, ſhould be of thoſe two kinds, which the iſland moſt abounded in, I mean wine and cattle; this ſeems to be a neglect not eaſy to be anſwered for to the poor men of your garriſon, or to the public.

The diſpoſitions for the defence within the place, were not in much greater forwardneſs than thoſe without it.

The repair of the platforms, and the timely care of that brave Volunteer, who provided for them, cannot be too gratefully acknowledged. But, ſir, were the ramparts, and the other works in equal readineſs?

The garriſon too having been accuſtom'd to live in the town of *St. Philips*, and other places of the iſland, and not in the caſtle, were leſs acquainted with their duty: doubtful where to place their centinels, where to make their blinds, and how to direct

direct the defence. In ſhort, every thing for the firſt ten days was in ſo great diſorder, as to make many think, that, had the *French* immediately marched up to the fort, inſtead of loitring at a diſtance, and amuſing themſelves with erecting batteries at Cape *Mola*, they might have carried it with very little reſiſtance: ſurely, my Lord, a great part of this confuſion might have been prevented; if you had for a month or two before, brought the regiments by turn into the caſtle, to be inſtructed in their duty there, to inform themſelves of what would be wanting, when they came to be ſhut up in it, and in what manner they were to order their defences.

But the capital miſtake ſeems to be the ſurrendry. My Lord, I do not ſay that you had no good reaſon for capitulating; but the public has never heard any.

How the Queen's redoubt came to be loſt; or why the enemy was left in quiet poſſeſſion of it, when by a vigorous and timely effort they might eaſily have been driven out again; why the *French* were ſuf-

fered,

fered, under pretence of a parly to bury their dead, to pour in thro' the palliſadoes double the number that had at firſt entered; why one whole regiment ſtood ſtill ready drawn up for the two moſt important hours of the attack, waiting for orders; and for want of an officer to command them, upon colonel *Jeffries'* being taken priſoner, are queſtions not addreſſed to the garriſon: becauſe theſe events are the natural conſequences of a governor's ſtaying at home, inſtead of being preſent at the chief place of action.

But great as the misfortune was of loſing this redoubt; yet the loſs of an out-work was never yet thought a ſufficient reaſon for ſurrendering a place, fortified like yours, before a breach was made, or a ſingle cannon erected to batter in breach.

The principal difficulty of a ſiege has hitherto been always reckon'd to be the ſtorming of the counterſcarp. That of *Keyſerwart* coſt the allies no leſs than three thouſand men; after which, the ſlower method of ſap grew generally into

to uſe; but the rocky ſoil of *St. Philips* would not admit of that, and it could be only taken by ſtorm. A loſs, like that I have mentioned, would have totally ruined the army you was attack'd by. Every one knows, that till the counterſcarp is taken, there is no approaching the ditch or battering in breach. And even after that, can an enemy be ſuppoſed to fly over a ditch, without having made galleries, or any of the previous diſpoſitions to paſs it? why then precipitate the ſurrendry. From Mr. *Armſtrong*'s account of the ſouterrans of *Minorca*; next after *Turin* and *Tournay*, this ſeems to have been one of the beſt min'd citadels in *Europe*: why then deliver it up without making any uſe of them *. You

* Of the utmoſt advantage to this place are certainly the capacious galleries, that are cut out of the rock, and extend themſelves under the covert way throughout all the works. Theſe ſubterraneans afford quarters and ſhelter to the garriſon, impenetrable to ſhot or ſhells: and not to be come at, but by cutting a way to them through the living rock: againſt which too they are provided with a number of countermines at proper diſtances, and in ſuch places as by their ſituation are moſt expoſed.

*Armſtrong*'s hiſtory of *Minorca*, page 26.

You had one company of artillery and miners in the fort, to direct and charge the mines; and why you had not more labouring miners sent you, is a question which others must give an answer to; but you certainly have no right to ask it, who never staid to let the enemy approach near enough to the body of the place, for them to be of any use there.

Every one knows the difficulties, which occur to an enemy in making a descent into, and the resources which a good governor will find in the defence of, a dry ditch, form'd in a rock, and furnish'd with mines and countermines like yours. See what the prince of *Hesse* did at *Gibraltar*, under much worse circumstances.

"Tho' the enemy has made wide breaches
" in several places, yet they dare not as-
" sault them; which has given time to the
" brave, active, and vigilant prince of *Hesse*
" (these are not epithets of my making)
" to cast up several entrenchments behind
" those breaches, and to make mines under
" the counterscarp." Annals, page 155.

We have heard of an intrenchment in the gorge of a baſtion, after a breach made in the face of it; but this argues a degree of obſtinacy in a governor far beyond our preſent meaſures of reſiſtance.

My Lord, if your defence was a juſt one, it was attended with one circumſtance, that ſeems little leſs than miraculous: I mean the very ſingular preſervation of your men. There is ſcarce any inſtance of a town's being well defended, where at leaſt a quarter, commonly a third, often a half of the garriſon are not diſabled during the ſiege.

I don't ſpeak on conjecture, but after examining the particular loſs at the ſeveral ſieges during king *William*'s and the ſucceeding reign. Mr. *d'Asfield*, whoſe defence of *Bonn* in the year 1689, is made a ſtandard of good management, loſt above a third of his garriſon, and was himſelf kill'd by a cannon ball, as he was giving orders on the rampart. Of fourteen thouſand men which Mr. *Feuquier* ſays marſhal *Boufflers* had in garriſon at *Namure*, but

eight thouſand marched out at the ſurrender: and when the ſame general capitulated for the city of *Liſle*, only five thouſand men went with him into the citadel out of fifteen thouſand which compoſed the original garriſon. Poſſibly indeed many might deſert, or conceal themſelves in the city. Of twelve battalions and twelve troops of dragoons, and five independant companies, which were in *Tournay*; but 3500 marched out of it. And of twenty battalions and three ſquadrons of dragoons which ſerved under M. *Albergotti* at the ſiege of *Douay*, but four thouſand five hundred marched out with him at the end of it. The ſiege of *Aëth* in ſixteen days reduced a garriſon of 2100 to 1200. *Menin* ſurrendered under the terror of the victory of *Ramillies* with a leſs loſs. But the governors of none of theſe places ever thought of capitulating till the counterſcarp had been taken, and a battery erected on it.

Surely then the garriſon of *St. Philip's*, which is now known to have conſiſted of 2860 men, could not have been very hard preſs'd, when their whole number of ſlain during

during above two months ſiege, was by the largeſt account leſs than one hundred.

I hope that no *Engliſh* commander will prodigally laviſh away the blood of his countrymen: but it is preſuming too far upon our ignorance, to expect that we ſhould honour this as a very obſtinate defence; where, excepting the laſt night, when you ſurrendered on the loſs of about twenty, but one man a day was killed during the ſiege. And we bluſh for our countrymen, who thought no commendations great enough for the bravery of a governor, at a time when the bills of mortality did not riſe higher in *St. Philip*'s, than in many of our larger country towns that were celebrating his valour.

The haſty ſurrendering of theſe cities during the laſt war, proceeded, as marſhal *Saxe* informs us, from a very different cauſe. The inhabitants of the country round fled into them for ſhelter: and ten, twenty, and thirty thouſand additional mouths, he ſays, eat up the proviſions in eight days, which might have ſerved the gar-

garrison for three months. In these cases therefore the proportion of the slain is not to be taken into the account.

" The sieges in *Brabant* had not been " carried on with such rapid success, if " the governors had not calculated the du- " ration of their defence by that of their " Provisions. Upon which account they " were as impatient for the making of a " sufficient breach, as the enemy; that " they might be thereby furnished with a " decent opportunity of capitulating; and " yet, notwithstanding this mutual dispo- " sition of the two contending parties to- " wards the accomplishment of the same " end, I have seen several governors ob- " liged to surrender, without having had " the honour of marching out through the " breach."

You my Lord was happy in being subject to none of these distresses. Far from the danger of being eaten up by the inhabitants, you was unhurt, either by excessive number of the living, or of the dead. But marched out almost compleat battalions,

thro'

thro' the gates, without a breach, and with full bellies.

After ſeeing ſo many examples, and ſuch indiſputable authorities on this head, we ſhall not wonder to hear that king *William* in the year 1695, ſhot the governor of *Dixmude* for ſurrendering up five battalions without a breach or lodgment made in the counterſcarp. And that friends and enemies, Mr. *Kane* and Mr. *Feuquier*, who ſerved that campaign in the two oppoſite armies, both approve of the ſentence. The governor of old *Briſac* was beheaded in the year 1703 for the ſame reaſon.

Not that I would ſuppoſe any thing in your Lordſhip's behaviour, which was criminal or puniſhable; all that is at preſent inquired is, what there was in it rewardable?

*F I N I S.*

MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM